



FREETOWN

Bristol County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Freetown is a pastoral community in Bristol County with a small summer colony and a maritime history. The town's early economy was based mostly on agriculture, but the water power of the Assonet River eventually brought grist, saw and fulling mills after 1695 and in the 18th century the town's industries included a tannery. One of the state's first trout hatcheries was established in Freetown, and in the 1870's railroad dining cars and the luxurious dining rooms of ocean liners were serving Freetown trout.

Freetown's position at the head of a tidewater made it the closest port to the iron-producing towns of Middleborough and Lakeville, encouraging iron foundries and nails works as well as shipyards. The shipyards built sloops and schooners, some of which probably then worked the coastal or foreign trade routes and brought their cargoes back to the busy wharves of Freetown. By the 19th century, iron ore came up the Assonet and into Freetown's wharves primarily from New Jersey. From the wharves the iron went to the factories in town making machine castings for textile machinery, a significant component of Freetown's industrial product at that time. The last ship was launched in Freetown in 1848, when the demand for larger ships outgrew the depth of the Assonet River and the extension of the railroads killed off coastal freighting.

Residents of the town turned to small market gardening, dairy production and lumbering and by the end of the century, much of the land that had been farmed was returning to forest as Freetown regained some of its pre-Colonial rural landscape. Residents are very proud of the town's Colonial history, pointing out that the first company of militia was formed in Freetown in 1683 and that three companies of Minute Men turned out on April 19, 1775 for the Battle of Lexington and then served honorably and well with the Continental Army.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Southeastern Massachusetts, bordered by Berkley and Lakeville on the north; Rochester on the east; Acushnet, New Bedford, and Dartmouth on the south; and Fall River on the southwest. Freetown is about 12 miles northeast of Fall River; 37 miles south of Boston; and 23 miles east of Providence, Rhode Island.

Total Area: 38.30 sq. miles

Land Area: 36.61 sq. miles

Population: 8,522

Density: 233 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(New Bedford Station)

Normal temperature in January.....30.6°F

Normal temperature in July.....73.5°F

Normal annual precipitation.....47.3"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Assonet, Assawompset Pond, New Bedford North, Fall River East

Regional Planning Agency

Southeastern Regional Planning and
Economic Development District

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

New Bedford



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (508) 644-2201

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1683

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	4,594		
Democrats	1,400	30.5	%
Republicans	498	10.8	%
Other parties	1	0.0	%
Unenrolled Voters	2,695	58.7	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Freetown town, Bristol County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	8,472	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	8,472	100.0
Male.....	4,259	50.3	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	62	0.7
Female.....	4,213	49.7	Mexican.....	11	0.1
Under 5 years.....	458	5.4	Puerto Rican.....	25	0.3
5 to 9 years.....	543	6.4	Cuban.....	8	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	665	7.8	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	18	0.2
15 to 19 years.....	656	7.7	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	8,410	99.3
20 to 24 years.....	404	4.8	White alone.....	8,107	95.7
25 to 34 years.....	1,055	12.5	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	1,504	17.8	Total population.....	8,472	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	1,584	18.7	In households.....	8,350	98.6
55 to 59 years.....	516	6.1	Householder.....	2,932	34.6
60 to 64 years.....	320	3.8	Spouse.....	2,060	24.3
65 to 74 years.....	444	5.2	Child.....	2,698	31.8
75 to 84 years.....	252	3.0	Own child under 18 years.....	1,884	22.2
85 years and over.....	71	0.8	Other relatives.....	357	4.2
Median age (years).....	38.0	(X)	Under 18 years.....	121	1.4
18 years and over.....	6,387	75.4	Nonrelatives.....	303	3.6
Male.....	3,150	37.2	Unmarried partner.....	148	1.7
Female.....	3,237	38.2	In group quarters.....	122	1.4
21 years and over.....	6,058	71.5	Institutionalized population.....	40	0.5
62 years and over.....	932	11.0	Noninstitutionalized population.....	82	1.0
65 years and over.....	767	9.1	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	330	3.9	Total households.....	2,932	100.0
Female.....	437	5.2	Family households (families).....	2,391	81.5
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	1,081	36.9
One race.....	8,371	98.8	Married-couple family.....	2,060	70.3
White.....	8,146	96.2	With own children under 18 years.....	918	31.3
Black or African American.....	61	0.7	Female householder, no husband present.....	235	8.0
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	16	0.2	With own children under 18 years.....	113	3.9
Asian.....	55	0.6	Nonfamily households.....	541	18.5
Asian Indian.....	14	0.2	Householder living alone.....	413	14.1
Chinese.....	18	0.2	Householder 65 years and over.....	153	5.2
Filipino.....	10	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	1,179	40.2
Japanese.....	-	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over ..	552	18.8
Korean.....	9	0.1	Average household size.....	2.85	(X)
Vietnamese.....	-	-	Average family size.....	3.14	(X)
Other Asian ¹	4	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	1	-	Total housing units.....	3,029	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	2,932	96.8
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	97	3.2
Samoan.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	1	-	occasional use.....	38	1.3
Some other race.....	92	1.1	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.5	(X)
Two or more races.....	101	1.2	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	2.1	(X)
<i>Race alone or in combination with one</i>			HOUSING TENURE		
<i>or more other races: ³</i>			Occupied housing units.....	2,932	100.0
White.....	8,231	97.2	Owner-occupied housing units.....	2,611	89.1
Black or African American.....	94	1.1	Renter-occupied housing units.....	321	10.9
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	43	0.5	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.91	(X)
Asian.....	60	0.7	Average household size of renter-occupied units ..	2.36	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	8	0.1			
Some other race.....	146	1.7			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State: 0

Conventional Federal: 0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP: 0

Federal (Section 8): 0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

Freetown which is situated in the New Bedford-Fall River Area is served by the airport and port facilities of Fall River and New Bedford. In addition, Interstate 195 and State Routes 24 and 140 provide access to the airports, ports, and intermodal facilities of Providence and Boston.

Major Highways

Principal highways are State Route 24 (the Fall River Expressway), State Route 79, which connects Freetown to Middleborough, and State Route 140, which runs N-S to New Bedford.

Rail

Conrail services a freight rail line through Freetown. Contact number:
(617) 783-6222

Bus

Freetown is a member of the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority but has chosen not to receive services. Limited paratransit services for the elderly and disabled are available through the Council on Aging. Commuter service to Boston and Logan Airport is available from Bonanza Bus Lines in neighboring Fall River.

Other

Fall River Municipal Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility, has 2 asphalt runways 1,600' and 3,950' long. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision. New Bedford Municipal Airport is a Primary Commercial Service (PR) facility with scheduled passenger flights. It has 2 asphalt runways 4,997' and 5,000' long. Instrument approaches available: Precision and non-Precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

None

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

None

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.